

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 08814 231807Z POSS DUPE
ACTION CU-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 L-03 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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P 231634Z DEC 76
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9624
INFO USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS LISBON 8814

STATE FOR CU/IAP - ROBERT JONES
USIA FOR IEU - ROBERT MCLAUGHLIN

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGSC OEXC
SUBJ: SPORTS AGREEMENT

REF: STATE 278237

SUMMARY: U.S. SIGNS SPORTS PROTOCOL WITH GOP.
PRESS COVERAGE, WITH EXCEPTION OF ANTICIPATED BLAST BY
COMMUNIST DAILY, EXTREMELY FAVORABLE AND EXTENSIVE.

1. ON DECEMBER 22 AMBASSADOR AND SECSTATE FOR SPORTS
JOAQUIM MANUEL BARROS DE SOUSA SIGNED SPORTS PROTOCOL FOR
U.S. AND GOP, RESPECTIVELY.
2. PORTUGUESE MEDIA TURNED OUT IN FULL TO COVER CEREMONY.
TV NEWSCAST GAVE LENGTHY REPORT AND CARRIED AMBASSADOR'S
REMARKS FOLLOWING SIGNING. AMBASSADOR ALSO GAVE RADIO INTER-
VIEW WHICH WILL BE BROADCAST IN FEW DAYS.
3. MORNING PAPERS DEC. 23 DEVOTED FRONT-PAGE SPACE TO
EVENT, AND ALSO CARRIED PHOTOS AND COMPLETE TEXTS OF
PROTOCOL AND AMBASSADOR'S REMARKS.

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4. PORTUGUESE MEDIA REACTED MOST FAVORABLY TO SPORTS
PROTOCOL SIGNING SINCE THEY AWARE THAT FOR PAST TWO AND
A HALF YEARS, UNDER COMMUNIST SECSTATE FOR SPORTS, ALL
SPORTING ACTIVITY WAS DEVOTED EXCLUSIVELY TO COOPERATION
WITH BLOC NATIONS. AFTERNOON DAILY "A LUTA", REFERRING

TO THIS SITUATION, SAID "PORTUGAL SIGNS AGREEMENT WITH U.S.,
EASTERN NATIONS MONOPLY ENDS", AND "O DIA" PRINTED
"REMEMBER THAT THE FORMER LEADERSHIP OF SECRETARIAT OF
SPORTS, ALIGNED WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTIES, WOULD ONLY
PERMIT ACCORDS TO BE SIGNED WITH EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES."
AS EXPECTED, COMMUNIST DAILY "O DIARIO" ATTACKED THE ACCORD
BITTERLY AS A "SELLOUT". PRESS MADE PROMINENT NOTE OF
AMBASSADOR'S STATEMENT TO EFFECT THAT "JUST AS THERE ARE
SUPER-STARS IN SPORTS, PORTUGAL HAS BECOME KNOWN WORLD-
WIDE THESE PAST TWO AND A HALF YEARS AS THE SUPERSTAR OF
DEMOCRACY" ..

5. FORWARDING COPY OF PROTOCOL SEPARATELY.

COMMENT: AS EVIDENCED BY HEAVY AND FAVORABLE PRESS
REACTION SPORTS PROTOCOL SIGNING CARRIES MOST IMPORTANT
POLITICAL MESSAGE AS WELL.

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